

## Chapter 1

# Attracting Buyers with Your eBay Listing

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Matching listings to your goods and your style
  - ▶ Attracting attention to your listings
  - ▶ Using the tools and techniques that make catchy listings
  - ▶ Copywriting, eBay style
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**W**hy is it that some eBay sellers are successful while others can't seem to move their similar items? We get e-mails every day from sellers who just can't figure out why their listings aren't generating sales. For some reason, they're not moving items as quickly as they feel they should. And they sense that other sellers are highly successful despite those sellers' confusing and overly graphic ads.

This quandary sets the stage for the advice in this chapter and the how-to information in this book. Your item listings (and more specifically, the text and images you include there) become your face to the buyers, and your auctions reflect your image. When you walk into a retail store; the décor projects an image. A visit to K-Mart (with the *Blue Light Special* blaring from above) gives you an entirely different feeling than does your stroll into Nordstrom (and subsequent lull into shopping heaven via the music of a pianist). This is the goal for your eBay listings: ***to make prospective customers feel comfortable spending their money with you.***

## *Creating Listings That Are Uniquely You*

As a seller, you may be tempted to adopt the selling style of other people whom you perceive as successful (imitation is the sincerest form of flattery?). But have you done the research to see whether the “professional” you're

tempted to emulate is truly a “success?” Heck, even the pros have been known to do it; rumor has it that Marsha (early on in her eBay days) tried copying the style of a seller who sold hundreds of items a day. (Hey, learn by doing.) But no matter how she tried, no dice — until she did a little homework and figured out that there was more to this seller than met the eye.

Sometimes the only way to know the real story is to do some online research. Marsha looked at the completed listings from the “big-time” seller — and found that only about 1 in 20 of the listings resulted in the item being sold. So how on earth could this person be such a huge success on eBay? Here’s the scoop:

- ✓ **Quantity does matter:** The seller listed hundreds of items per day, and whatever sold, sold. If it didn’t sell on eBay, the item then came up for sale in the seller’s retail location.
- ✓ **Service fees make money, too:** This seller was an *eBay Trading Assistant* (a seller who sells items on eBay for those who choose not to sell their own) — and charged clients a minimum fee to cover the time and expenses for every item listed.



TIP

*Research* — whether it’s for an item you plan on selling or buying, or for just about any situation you face on eBay — is your number-one tool for success. If you think that a certain seller is a whiz-bang success, confirm your suspicions by taking a look at that seller’s completed listings.



REMEMBER

As sellers, you need to concentrate on what works best for your own style of listings and the type of items you sell. Learning from other sellers can be helpful, but copying the look of someone else’s listings is really a waste of time (not to mention unfair to the person who worked hard to develop his or her own branded templates).

Oddly enough, whether you sell auto parts or designer dresses, the basic rules for successful listings (which we outline in this book) are the same. You may choose different colors for your descriptive text (as an automotive seller versus a fashion peddler), but all the information this book provides about the structure and content of your listing still applies.



REMEMBER

A successful listing gives prospective buyers the right information — in a pleasing manner that entices them to either place a bid or click the Buy It Now button. It’s as simple as that!

## Making Your Listing Stand Out from the Others


Aside from all the sage advice we give you in this book, eBay — not so surprisingly — offers you a good many options to up the value of your listings. Prudent use of these options (*translation*: not spending too much of your profits on them) can bring greater attention to your listings; Figure 1-1 shows a typical listing that uses them successfully. Here are a few of the more popular options:

- ✔ **Buy It Now (BIN):** Gives your buyers the benefit of their two favorite options: auctions and fixed-price sales. For a fee from 5 to 25 cents (depending on the BIN price), you can sell your item directly to the first buyer who meets the fixed price (optional), or if someone places a bid, the Buy It Now option disappears.

Listed in category: [Cameras & Photo](#) > [Lighting & Studio Equipment](#) > [Continuous Lighting](#)

**Photography Photo 2 FLOOD LIGHTS w/ STANDS Lighting Kit** Item number: 7559063878

Seller of this item? [Sign in](#) for your status [Watch this item](#) in My eBay | [Email to a friend](#)



[Larger Picture](#)

Starting bid: **US \$119.99**

*Buy It Now* price: **US \$123.99**

Time left: **2 days 22 hours**  
 3-day listing, Ends Nov-03-05 14:28:36 PST

Start time: Oct-31-05 14:28:36 PST


History: [0 bids](#)

Item location: Los Angeles  
United States

Ships to: United States

**Seller information**

[marsha\\_c](#) (4088 ★)

 Seller


Feedback Score: 4088  
**Positive Feedback: 100%**  
 Member since Jan-05-97 in United States

[Read feedback comments](#)

[Add to Favorite Sellers](#)

[Ask seller a question](#)

**View seller's other items**  
[Store view](#) | [List view](#)

**Visit this seller's eBay Store!**  


**Figure 1-1:** This listing gives prospective buyers an option on how to buy your item.

- ✔ **Subtitle:** Wow. When eBay first came out with this option, we thought that it was a pretty darned expensive tool. Fifty cents is an awful lot of coin to pay for additional text to appear next to your title — especially since that text is findable only when a potential buyer searches for title and description. But (being the open-minded sellers we are) we thought we'd give it a try. Double wow, son-of-a-gun, it works.



All but a miniscule number of searches for items are run for “title only,” so the cost of including a descriptive subtitle can be worth it! For example, a subtitle works really well when you have a lot of competition (meaning lots of other sellers are selling the same item). By putting together a well-phrased, 55-character subtitle, you can pull the buyers’ eyes right off the competition’s listings and onto yours. Figure 1-2 shows you a listing that takes full advantage of the subtitle option.

**Figure 1-2:** Use the subtitle option to show buyers that your item has more value than does the competition’s similar listings.

124 items found for <b>desk reference</b> <a href="#">Add to Favorite Searches</a>						
List View	Picture Gallery	Sort by:	Time: ending soonest	Customize Display		
Compare	Item Title	PayPal	Price	Bids	Time Left	Shipping
<input type="checkbox"/>			\$1.99	-	17m	\$2.95
<input type="checkbox"/>			\$24.68	3	41m	\$4.99
<input type="checkbox"/>			\$9.90	2	15h 15m	\$4.22
<input type="checkbox"/>			\$29.99	<i>Buy It Now</i>	16h 18m	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/>			GBP 7.99	-	17h 17m	See description
<input type="checkbox"/>			GBP 7.99	-	18h 47m	See description

- ✔ **Bold Title:** When you select the Bold option, your listing appears in boldface type in searches, as well as in category browsing. It’s a good option to use if you’re in competition with other sellers hawking the same items. But we suggest you use this option only if your item can sell for a good price; otherwise the \$1 bold fee can take a large chunk out of your profits!
- ✔ **Highlight:** Let’s hear it for the big yellow highlighter! Nothing like it for getting to the gist of a book. Strangely, however (beats us as to why), the eBay highlight feature is lilac. Be sure to look at the category in which you choose to list before selecting this feature. Some categories (such as Home Page Featured) are overwhelmed with sellers using the highlight option — the pages look completely shaded in lilac. In these categories, *not* using highlight (and using perhaps a bold title instead) might make your listing stand out even more.



Five dollars is a pretty large investment to make in an option, so be sure that it will really work for you before laying down that kind of scratch.

✔ **Box border:** Here's one of my personal favorites. You can put a box around your listing to draw the page viewers' eyes right to your item. Using a box border is attention-getting — and a real bargain to boot — at only \$3! For some reason, sellers occasionally choose to use this option in combination with the Highlight option, which hikes their additional fees to \$8. Why use both when the box alone will do the trick for your item?

✔ **Home Page Featured:** *Location, location, location* is the byword for prime real estate; the Home Page Featured option gives you the highest level of visibility at eBay: a spot on the home page. Your listing may show up in that captivating little box that appears smack dab in the center of the eBay Home page — although there's no *guarantee* that it will. But since a huge percentage of visitors to the eBay site enter through — and scour — the home page, they tend to be attracted to this boxed area, and usually click the [See All Featured Items](#) link. This link leads them to the special Featured Items auction section. When you list with this option, your item is also featured (at the top of the page) on the individual category pages of the featured items (kinda hard to miss).

Bidders browse the Featured Items tabs (Auctions, Buy It Now, or All Items) to see what's listed in there, just as you might make a beeline to the New Releases section of your video store. The charges that put your listing in this special area are \$39.95 to list a single Home Page Featured item and \$79.95 for multiple items.

Figure 1-3 shows a typical example from The eBay Home Page Featured section, featuring some popular options: Bold, Highlight, Box and Gallery. (And yes, sometimes the Home Page Featured sellers go a bit overboard on the options!)

✔ **Featured Plus!** To get top billing on an eBay page, you can list your item with the Featured Plus! option for \$19.95. This option puts your listing on the first page of your item category, as well as at the top of most search-results pages that find it. This option works well for moving special merchandise and setting yourself apart from the competition. Remember your budget: Will your item bring in enough profit to make it worth the 20 bucks to list it at the top of the page? If you feel this is the case, go for it. Figure 1-4 shows how items appear when listed at the top of the page after they're "Featured" in Category listings or searches.

**Figure 1-3:**  
An example from The eBay Home Page Featured section.

<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">Philippine Pool Cue billiards stick REAL IRON WOOD INL.</a>	6	<b>\$33.50</b>	Not specified	3h 55m
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">Xbox 360 - Game console/Full System</a> Launch Game of choice included	22	<b>\$610.00</b>	\$30.00	3h 56m
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">SHAG RUGS SNOW WHITE 8 X 11 WHITEST OF ALL WHITES FANCY</a>	-	<b>\$269.00</b>	\$110.00	4h 21m
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">Babe Ruth Ty Cobb Iris Speaker Joe Dimaggio PSA/DNA</a> Incredibly Scarce Artifact Signatures are PERFECT!	20	<b>\$9,655.00</b>	See description	4h 34m
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">BOTTLE OPENER - NEW - Speed, Magnetic, Easy 2 use</a> Wholesale pricing! Blank openers available upon request	-	<b>\$3.99</b>	\$3.00	4h 56m
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">GOLD 18 K GOLD OM / AUM PENDANT</a>	-	<b>\$139.79</b>	\$15.98	5h 12m






**Figure 1-4:**  
Featured items appear at the top of a search page or at the top of the category listings, as illustrated by these interesting A4 items.

6948 items found for a4 [Add to Favorite Searches](#)

List View | [Picture Gallery](#) Sort by: [Time: ending soonest](#) [Customize Display](#)

[Compare](#) **Item Title** [PayPal](#) [Price](#) [Bids](#) [Time Left](#) [Shipping](#)

**Featured Items**

<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">Honda, VW Audi A4 Turbo Manifold</a> Built to spec		<b>\$525.00</b>	-	12m	Not specified
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">Audi - A4 QUATTROWAGON 2001 AUDI A4 AVANT QUATTRO WAGON, CD, AUTO, GORGEOUS!</a>	8	<b>\$6,600.00</b>	\$14,975.00	14m	See description
Optimize your selling success! Find out how to <a href="#">promote your items</a>							
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">AUDI CARBON FIBER LICENSE FRAME QUATTRO TT A4 S4 A6 A8</a>		<b>\$10.99</b>	\$11.99	<1m	\$6.99
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">NEW PHATBOX PHATNOISE AUDI A6 A4 DIGITAL JUKEBOX 20GB</a>		<b>\$159.99</b>	-	1m	Calculate
<input type="checkbox"/>		<a href="#">Minichamps 1/43 Audi A4 4 door</a>	1	<b>\$9.00</b>		2m	Not specified

✔ **Gallery Picture:** This is one of the few “musts” in our eBay repertoire. For only 35 cents, you can display a mini-postage-stamp-size version of your item’s picture next to its title. This Gallery picture shows up when a prospective buyer is browsing in a category or performing a search and perusing the results.

If you don’t use a Gallery picture and just include a picture in your description, eBay displays a silly green camera icon next to your listing. There’s no way that the little camera icon can compete with the other sellers’ appropriately placed Gallery images. Bottom line: If you’re going to sell, you’d better spend that 35 cents for the extra exposure.



If you’re selling a media product such as a book, CD, or DVD, eBay supplies the picture for you; it doesn’t get any easier than that. For the same 35 cents, eBay will show a stock picture (and some pre-filled text) fed in from an online media library. All you have to do is type in the number below the barcode (the ISBN or UPC code number) as found on the back of your item in the Pre-filled information, find your item area, and eBay does the rest. You can also input the author’s or artist’s name, or the work’s title. If you choose this input method, eBay presents you with a page of images to select from. eBay also adds stock information (a prewritten description of the item) about your media item in the description.

Figure 1-5 shows you the area from the Sell Your Item (SYI) form where you input your data, and Figure 1-6 shows you how the picture appears in the listing.

**Figure 1-5:** Type in the book’s ISBN number (or author’s name or just the title) as prompted in the Sell Your Item form.

**Find Your Product: book**

ISBN, Title, or Author  
starting an eBay business

Automatically fill your listing with information about your book.

- ISBN, Title, or Author and click the **Search** button.
- You can also click "Continue without" to list with the standard form.

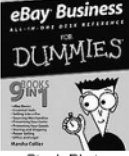

065425364X

ISBN 0-654-25364-X

Don't show me again for 30 days

| [Continue without](#)

**Figure 1-6:**  
Here's the  
book detail  
as it  
appears in  
the  
description  
of the media  
item.

Description (revised)	
<b>Ebay Business All-in-one Desk Reference For Dummies</b>	
	<p><i>Item Specifics - Nonfiction Books</i></p> <p>Author: <b>Marsha Collier</b></p> <p>Publisher: <b>Hungry Minds Inc</b></p> <p>ISBN: <b>0764584383</b></p> <p>Format: <b>Softcover</b></p> <p>Publication Year: <b>2005</b></p> <p>Special Attributes: <b>Signed, 1st Edition</b></p>
	Category: <b>Business &amp; Economics</b> <b>General Business</b>
	Condition: <b>New</b>
<p>Stock Photo</p> <p>Portions of this page Copyright 1995 - 2005 Muze Inc.  All rights reserved.</p> <p><a href="#">Additional information</a></p>	

## Constructing Catchy Listings

You have several things to keep in mind when creating listings that will draw the eyes (and the wallets) of the buying market. For example, you need a catchy title and a winning description. Read on to see the ultimate tips to luring bidders to your sales.

### Writing a title that sells

Your title is (next to your Gallery image) the most important way to draw people to your listing. eBay buyers are search-engine-driven — they find most of their items by typing selected keywords into the search box and clicking the Search button. Those keywords should be all your title consists of. No fancy prose. No silly words that people won't search for. Here are a few examples of eBay's worst title words:

- ✓ L@@K
- ✓ Nice
- ✓ WOW
- ✓ RARE

Do yourself a favor — *never* include these words in your title. No one ever searches for these words — ever! (For that matter, nobody's looking for “!!!!!!” in the title, either. Can't think why . . .)





Okay, we're gonna say it up front: If you've finished writing your item title and you have spaces left over, *please* fight the urge to dress it up with lots of exclamation points and asterisks. No matter how gung-ho you are about your item, the eBay search engine may overlook your item if the title is encrusted with meaningless \*\*\*\*, \$\$\$\$ , and !!!! symbols. If bidders do see your title, they may become annoyed by their virtual shrillness and ignore them!!!!!! (See what I mean?)

Another distracting habit is overdoing capital letters. To buyers, seeing everything in caps is LIKE SEEING A CRAZED SALESMAN SCREAMING AT THEM TO BUY NOW! Using all caps online is considered *shouting* — it's annoying and tough on the eyes. Use capitalization SPARINGLY, and only to finesse a particular point or name.

### ***Look for keywords that pay off***

Hands down, the most valuable real estate on eBay is the 55-character title of your item. The majority of buyers do title searches, and that's where your item must come up if it's going to be sold!

Here are some ideas to help you fill in the keywords in your item title:

- ✔ Use the most common name for the item, and only if there's room, list the alternate name. For example, say *salt shaker*, and if there's room, add *saltcellar*.
- ✔ If the item *is* actually rare or hard to find, okay, mention that. But instead of the word *RARE* (so overused it's practically invisible), include the acronyms (OOAK, OOP, or HTF) that eBay users have come to rely on. (No, they aren't cartoon noises; the table in the next section lists what they mean.)
- ✔ Mention the item's condition and whether it's new or old. When applicable (as with gently used items), include the item's age or date of manufacture.
- ✔ Mention the item's special qualities, such as its style (for a handbag), model (for a camera), or edition (for a book).
- ✔ Include brand names, if those names are significant. If you're selling a for-real Tiffany lamp, you want people to know it!
- ✔ State the size of the item or other descriptive information, such as color or material content.

***eBay lingo at a glance***

Here's a crash course in eBay lingo that can help bring you up to speed on attracting buyers to your auction. Table 1-1 summarizes some abbreviations used frequently in eBay auctions; they can do wonders to jump-start your title.

Also, a whole smattering of acronyms that abbreviate item characteristics are part of the eBay business experience. As eBay has grown, so has this specialized lingo. Members use these acronyms as shortcuts to describe their merchandise.

So here, as promised, is Table 1-1: a handy list of common acronyms and related phrases used to describe items on eBay. (*Hint: Mint* means “may as well be brand new,” not “cool chocolate treat attached.”)

<b><i>eBay Code</i></b>	<b><i>What It Abbreviates</i></b>	<b><i>What It Means</i></b>
MIB	Mint in Box	The item is in the original box, in great shape, and just the way you'd expect to find it in a store.
MIMB	Mint in Mint Box	The box has never been opened and looks like it just left the factory.
MOC	Mint on Card	The item is mounted on its original display card, attached with the original fastenings, in store-new condition.
NRFB	Never Removed from Box	Just what it says, as in “bought but never opened.”
COA	Certificate of Authenticity	Documentation that vouches for the genuineness of an item, such as an autograph or painting.
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacture	You're selling the item and all the equipment that originally came with it, but you don't have the original box, owner's manual, or instructions.
OOAK	One of a kind	You are selling the only one in existence!
NR	No Reserve Price	You can set a <i>reserve price</i> when you begin your auction. If bids don't meet the reserve, you don't have to sell. Many buyers are leery of reserve prices because they're after a more obvious bargain. If you're not listing a reserve price for your item, let bidders know.

<i>eBay Code</i>	<i>What It Abbreviates</i>	<i>What It Means</i>
NWT	New with Tags	An item, possibly apparel, is in new condition with the tags from the manufacturer still affixed.
HTF, OOP	Hard to Find, Out of Print	Out of print, only a few ever made, or people grabbed up all there were. (HTF doesn't mean you spent a week looking for it in the attic.)

Normally, you can rely on eBay slang to get your point across, but make sure that you mean it *and that you're using it accurately*. Don't label something MIB (Mint in Box) when it looks like it's been Mashed in Box by a meat-grinder. You'll find more abbreviations on Marsha's Web site at [www.cool ebaytools.com](http://www.cool ebaytools.com).



Use the spell checker to verify your titling! It bears repeating: Check and recheck your spelling. Savvy buyers use the eBay search engine to find merchandise; if the name of your item is spelled wrong, the search engine can't find it. In addition, poor spelling and incomprehensible grammar reflect badly on you. If you're in competition with another seller, the buyer is likelier to trust the seller *hoo nose gud spelling*.

## *Adding information with a subtitle*

eBay allows you to buy an additional 55-character subtitle, which will appear under your item title in a search or in a category browse. The fee for this extra promotion is 50 cents; in a few circumstances, it may be worth your while. Any text you input will *really* make your item stand out in the crowd — but (You knew there would be a *but*, didn't you?) these additional characters don't come up in a title search. So if you have the same words as your subtitle in your description, the words will be found either way with a title and description search. The benefit of the subtitle is that it makes your listing stand out when users browse or look up searches.

## *Gathering the tools you'll need*

Throughout this book, we talk about adding selling power to your listings by applying your skills with photography and HTML. A little knowledge and a few tools are all you need to compete with the big guys. As a matter of fact, you may not need every bit of information in this book. But we want to give you plenty of options and insight into what you need to know to compete.

The big guys — Bose, Hewlett Packard (HP), Sony, Disney, all those big-time merchants that sell on eBay — attract buyers with exactly the same methods you find in this book. Pick out your chapters and use the information that applies to your needs, as follows:

- ✔ If you're interested in spicing up the appearance of your listing text, get yourself a text editor and get ready to brush up on your HTML skills. For example, you can use Windows Notepad and the free “try before you buy” version of a major program: CuteHTML 2.3.
- ✔ If you want your product photos to do the work, check out the photography tricks that you can accomplish with a simple digital camera and inexpensive accessory equipment. Try a snappy little software called Fast Photos (there's a free trial on the [coolebaytools.com](http://coolebaytools.com) Web site).

We promise that this book's advice on improving the text and pictures you use in your listings will serve you well. Your mission (should you decide to accept it) is to ease into using them. At first, take baby steps toward enhancing your item listings. As your online business grows, you can expand your methods and offerings — but only if you want to.

## Copywriting, eBay-style

A fabulous description goes a long way to upping your bottom line. Those aforementioned big guys don't leave any details out of their descriptions, so why should you? Don't think Hemingway here; think *infomercial*. Figure 1-7 shows a listing with a great description — and yours can be magnificent. All you have to do is click in the Description text box of the Sell Your Item form and start typing — glancing at this book now and then for sage guidance, of course.

**Figure 1-7:**  
Writing a  
good  
description  
can mean  
the  
difference  
between  
auction  
success  
and failure.

**Pyrex 14-Piece Bake and Serve Set**

Pyrex is the first name in bakeware. From the kitchen, to the oven, to the table, to the refrigerator—all in one bowl. This set is just the thing for the on-the-go family that doesn't have time to wash lots of dishes (and who does!)

This 14 pc. set from the Pyrex Bake and Serve line features

- 9" x 13" x 2" dish with dark blue plastic storage cover
- 8" x 8" x 2" dish with dark blue plastic storage cover
- 2 natural wood and wrought iron baskets
- (4) 2-cup round storage dishes with dark blue plastic storage covers

If you like this Item and are looking for other kitchen applications, please visit Kitchen Kountry, our fully-stocked eBay Store.

Here's a list of suggestions for writing an effective item description:

- ✔ **List the item's benefits.** Give the buyer a reason to buy your item and be enthusiastic when you list all the reasons everyone should bid on it. Unlike the listing's title, you can use as much space as you want. Be precise in your description: tell how big it is, what color, what kind of fabric, what design, and so on. Also, mention any alternative uses for the item — perhaps those pantyhose can also be used for straining yogurt?
- ✔ **Include the negative.** Don't hide the truth of your item's condition. Trying to conceal flaws costs you in the long run — in terms of (for openers) returned items, bad feedback, or (at very worst) a fraud investigation. If the item has a scratch, a nick, a dent, a crack, a ding, a tear, a rip, missing pieces, replacement parts, faded color, dirty smudges, or a bad smell (especially if cleaning might damage the item), mention it in the description. If your item has been overhauled, rebuilt, repainted, or hot-rodged, say so. You don't want the buyer to flip out because you weren't truthful about imperfections or modifications.
- ✔ **Promote your other listings.** The pros always do a little cross-promotion, and it works. When the hosts on the morning news tell you to tune in for something special, they're trying to prevent you from turning to the competition. So, a word to the wise: If you're selling photography equipment and cat toys, be sure to point to *both* store categories.
- ✔ **While you're at it, promote yourself, too.** As you build your feedback rating, point out your terrific track record to potential bidders. Add statements like "I'm great to deal with. Check out my feedback." You can even take it a step farther by inviting prospective bidders to your About Me page (where you may also include a link to your personal Web site if you have one).
- ✔ **Spell out pre-sale details.** Occasionally, sellers offer an item as a *pre-sell*, or an item that the seller doesn't yet have in stock but expects to. If you're offering this kind of item, make sure that you spell out all the details in the description.



eBay policy (and Federal Trade Commission law) states that you must ship a pre-sell item within 30 days of receiving payment, so be sure you will have the item within that time span. Also don't forget to include the actual shipping date. And don't forget that putting up an item for sale *without actually having it in hand* is a practice fraught with risk. The item you are expecting may not arrive in time, or it may arrive damaged. We've heard too many sad tales of sellers who got caught in this situation — and had to go out and purchase an item at retail for a buyer in order to preserve their feedback.

- ✔ **Invite questions.** Make the buyer comfortable with the idea of e-mailing you with a question. Some sellers seem way too busy (or full of themselves) in their text to make you want to ask a question. Remember, customer service is the key to high bids.

- ✔ **Wish your potential bidders well.** Communication is the key to a good transaction, and you can set the tone for your auction and post-auction exchanges by including some simple phrases that show your friendly side. Always end your description by wishing bidders good luck, inviting potential bidders to e-mail you with questions, and offering the option of providing additional photos of the item if you have them.



Like stores that hang signs saying “No shirt, no shoes, no service,” eBay members can refuse to do business with other members. You have the right to be selective (within reason and the law, of course) about whom you want as a prospective buyer for your item. The listing is yours, and you can protect your investment any way you want. However, you can’t discriminate or break any state or federal laws in your description. If you’ve had bad experiences with certain members of the eBay community, you may block them as bidders from your business. Just don’t be rude and negative. There’s no faster way to turn off a bidder than by having more warnings and rules than you have description. Take a look at Figure 1-8 for a listing that doesn’t exactly exude customer service.

**Figure 1-8:**  
Is this any way to start your description? Is it any way to attract new customers?

Description
DO NOT BID IF YOU DO NOT AGREE TO THESE TERMS!!!!!! IF YOU HAVE LESS THAN 10 POSITIVE FEEDBACKS, EMAIL ME FIRST!
PLEASE READ LISTING VERY CLOSELY BEFORE YOU BID! PAYMENT WITHIN THREE DAYS OF AUCTION. PAYPAL ONLY. DO NOT BID IF YOU DO NOT INTEND TO PAY. PLEASE KEEP EBAY SAFE FOR THE HONEST EBAYERS!!! US ONLY. DO NOT BID ON THIS AUCTION IF YOU HAVE LESS THAN 10 POSITIVE FEEDBACKS!! CHECK OUT MY OTHER AUCTIONS!

Following our tips will go a long way to helping you raise your bottom line. Since there are two of us, we offer two unique perspectives for enhancing an item description. Here they are:

- ✔ **Remember what your English teacher taught you.** Make your description like a woman’s skirt: Long enough to cover the subject but short enough to keep it interesting.
- ✔ **Write your description as if you didn’t have a picture.** Use words to draw a mental image of your item. That way, your prospective buyer will know what the item looks like if the photo server fails and the image doesn’t show up. (“Electric guitar” just doesn’t say much if what you’re selling is a “near-mint Fender Stratocaster, American Deluxe Series, maple neck, abalone inlays, Transparent Crimson finish, gold hardware, in original plush-lined hardshell case.”)

Remember these pearls of wisdom next time you write up a listing.